

Rare Animals of Louisiana



Pine Woods Snake

Rhadinaea flavilata

Rarity Rank: S1/G4

	1	2	3	4	5
State					
Global					
	imperiled		rare		secure



Photo by Jeff Boundy

Identification:

- A slender snake
- Back golden brown to reddish brown
- Belly white, yellow or yellow green
- Head is dark and often with a narrow, dark stripe through the eye
- Lips are white or yellow
- Adults from 10 to 13 inches long and young from 5.5 to 6.5 inches at hatching

Habitat:

Can be found in or under logs, leaves, or soils in coastal pine flatwoods and bottomland hardwood forests

Food habits:

- Frogs, lizard, small salamanders, and small snakes
- Has slightly venomous saliva that it uses to capture food
- Upon capturing food, the snake partially swallows the prey so that it can use the fangs in the back of its mouth to inject a slightly venomous saliva and remains still until the prey item ceases to move

Range:

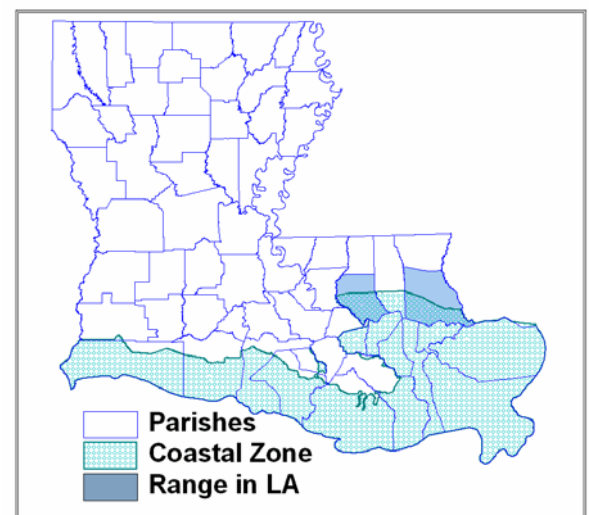
Found along the Atlantic and Gulf coast from North Carolina to Louisiana

Reproduction:

- Pairs mate in the late winter/ early spring
- Females lay clutches of 2 to 4, yellowish-white, leathery eggs in rotting logs between June and August
- Young hatch in September

Threats:

- Land use conversion and habitat destruction
- Fire suppression



Range based on occurrences in Natural Heritage database

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Beneficial Management Practices:

- Prevent conversion of existing natural forests to other land uses
- Use of growing season prescribed fire (April-June) at a frequency of every 5 to 10 years
- No logging during wet periods when the soil is saturated
- No bedding or other soil disturbance that may alter natural water flow patterns
- Prohibit off-road vehicle use, or restrict use to pre-existing trails
- Remove any invasive exotic plant species with use of spot herbicides or mechanical means

LA River Basins:

Pearl, Pontchartrain

References:

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- Dundee, H. A., and D. A. Roosman. 1996. The amphibians and reptiles of Louisiana. Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.
- Ernst, C.H. and R.W. Barbour. 1989. Snakes of Eastern North America. George Mason University Press, Fairfax, Virginia.
- Wilson, L. A. 1995. Land manager's guide to the amphibians and reptiles of the south. Nature Conservancy, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.